

BANYULE BABBLE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF BANYULE

HOLY SPIRIT WATSONIA ❄️ ST ANDREW'S ROSANNA ❄️ ST JOHN'S HEIDELBERG

NOVEMBER
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RENÉ WRITES

How do you act when you know there's a crisis coming? If you were faced with an event that threatened to turn your world upside-down, what would you do? If, say, Australia was on the verge of war and we were all being shipped off as refugees for another country? Or if you knew in a few months you would lose your eyesight. What would you do to get ready? Would you do anything?

In Luke 16 Jesus tells us that we're about to face a crisis, and that we'd better prepare for it. A time is coming when everything will change. The decisions we're making now will have a permanent impact on what life will look like after this world-changing event that's coming on us.

He tells the story of a man who faced a crisis of his own.

"There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. So he called him in and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.'" (Luke 16:1-2)

The rich man hears a report of his manager and all the shenanigans he's getting up to with his books. He calls him into his office and tells him—you're fired, clean out your desk and get out.

I don't know if you've ever been fired from a job, but there's really nothing like it to get your imagination working. I once worked at a bakery down the road from my house, just to earn some pocket money during uni. Well one day the owner came up to me and said, "Mate, I'm just going to have to let you go." He explained that I was no good at working behind the counter, I kept making mistakes, I didn't smile enough for the customers, and he'd just given me enough chances.

Well I have to tell you it was a blow to the ego, getting told I can't do something as menial as taking money and giving back change. I was humiliated, but I also started thinking of all the things I could do instead of working at the bakery, new possibilities were opening up to me! What other work could I get? What other careers were out there besides cleaning bakeries?

The dishonest manager in the parable started thinking about his options, too.

"The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm ashamed to beg—I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.'

He comes up with a scheme for securing his long term welfare by putting his master's

money to work for his own benefit. He calls in each of his master's debtors and gets each of them to sit down and re-write their debts, so they wouldn't have to pay back as much.

Now the debtors are pleased, they've had huge chunks of their debt shaved off, so they're pretty happy with this guy. He's done them a great favour. Now they're likely to pay him back by offering him hospitality, places to stay, and the means to live. The manager might have lost his job, but now he's set up for life, thanks to his quick wits and long-term planning. And he did it all with the resources at hand. He saw a crisis was approaching, and decided to act in the short term for the sake of his long-term benefit.

Jesus continues:

"The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light."

It's not that Jesus approved of this guy ripping off his boss, he doesn't commend that. He uses the manager as a great example of shrewdness, of understanding the time that he's in. If only Christians would understand the times they're living in, with a view to the crisis that is coming.

"I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings."

Jesus has the two ages of this world firmly fixed at the front of his mind. The present age, which is passing, and the age to come, the age of God's kingdom. The disciples should be preparing for the age to come. And they should be doing it with their money.

He urges us to make friends with our worldly wealth, because this kind of wealth will pass. You can't take it where you're going. You could spend it on another piece of clothing or at a restaurant or on something else that will make you feel good for a bit, but will have no lasting value. Or you could lay up treasures for yourself in heaven, by investing in those who will be with you in the age to come.

Not giving it to people who can pay you back in this life. Not sharing with people who can get you a better job, or improve your social standing, or whose approval you'd like. No, give it to the people who can't repay you, so you can be sure that the only reward you'll get will be in the new age.

There is a day coming when Jesus will return to judge the world. After that, it will be too late. Have you ever thought it would be good to give to Oxfam or Tear fund or World Vision or Anglicare, but never got around to

it? Well, when Jesus comes, it'll be too late. I'll never get another chance to show generosity like I can now. My money will be gone, and I'll miss out on the joy of giving to those who'd have been eternally thankful.

Jesus wants to radically alter the way we think about our money. Because it isn't really our money, it's God's. Everything we have is on loan from him, and it's up to us to make the most of it. We Christians will handle our trust well if we have the day of Jesus' return in mind. We need to show how well we can use the resources God's given us, in the limited time we have.

René



The Anglican Parish
of Banyule

Spring Fair

at

St Andrew's, Rosanna
Cnr Invermay & Grandview Grove

Saturday 9th November
at 9.30am to 2.00pm

*Stalls galore, children's activities,
entertainment and more!*

ALL WELCOME!!

Entertainment schedule:

11.00 am *mainly music session*

11.45 am *Rhythm of Life: African
Drumming (demo and workshop)*

12.30 pm *Uncle Rusty on the guitar*

*Relaxing background MUSIC in the
HAPPY CAFÉ with Mike and George*

*GIANT jumping castle, face painting,
children's activities, wood turning*

Something for everyone!

This Month – November

Sunday 3rd: Congregational meetings after service at each centre: 8 am St Andrew's, 10 am St John's (family service), 5 pm Holy Spirit

Saturday 9th: 9.30 am – 2 pm Parish Fair

Sunday 10th: 10 am St John's; 10 am St Andrew's; 5 pm Holy Spirit (with teaching)

Monday 11th: 9.45 am cars leave Viewbank and Watsonia for 10.30 am Remembrance Day service and M.U. Northern Deanery Day at All Saints' Preston

Wednesday 13th: 8.15 am cars leave Viewbank and Watsonia for 10 am Australian M.U. Conf. Open Day, Pallotti College Millgrove

Sunday 17th: 10 am St John's; 10 am St Andrew's; 5 pm Holy Spirit (with teaching)

Monday 18th: 12 noon St Andrew's Mothers' Union End-of-Year, The Sycamore Tree Heidelberg

Wednesday 20th: 11 am Iris Grange

Sunday 24th *Christ the King:* 10 am Combined Parish Service at St John's, followed by AGM

Wednesday 27th: 10 am Holy Spirit Mothers' Union, then Café Rimba Springthorpe

Wanted

- New ADF deposits
- New vestry members

Money – July–September

Income: Giving: \$23,770.85
Other: \$79,468.11
Total: \$103,238.96

Expenses: \$101,521.60

Profit: \$1,717.36

The result looks nicely balanced, but in fact \$22,276.37 of the income was money taken out of our other accounts, so really there was a loss of over \$20,000.

The depletion of our other ADF accounts means we really would benefit from any money parishioners could deposit in ADF accounts and specify support for the Parish of Banyule. Your money will remain guaranteed by the diocese, but the interest we pay on our loan will decrease.

Biddy Colvin's memorial service

Many thanks to all the St Andrew's people who helped make Mum's memorial service a special time for us all. Your help and support were greatly appreciated.

A couple of comments re last month's *Babble*: Mum had four grandchildren, not eight, but having said that she would have happily considered their four partners her grandchildren. Mum and Dad ran a 'café' in their home for the youth group for several years, not the official youth group activities at the church, which were run by Mavis and Jack Viccars.

Quite a few of the youth from fifty years ago were at Mum's service and all mentioned how good it was to be back at St Andrew's. Many positive vibes.

Carlota and Jill

Sunday Services in November

3rd Nov: 8 am Rosanna, 10 am Heidelberg (family service), 5 pm Watsonia. After each of these services there will be **congregational meetings** to discuss our future directions in these difficult times.

10th Nov: 10 am Heidelberg, 10 am Rosanna, 5 pm Watsonia.

17th Nov: 10 am Heidelberg, 10 am Rosanna, 5 pm Watsonia. Note this is not a combined service, because the AGM has been moved forward one week.

24th Nov: 10 am Combined service at Heidelberg, followed by **AGM**.

Holy Spirit Mothers' Union

At the AGM on Oct 23rd the committee was re-elected unopposed.

Dates to remember:

November 11th (Mon): Northern Deanery Day at Darebin M.U. at All Saints' Preston, starting with the Remembrance Day Service at 10.30 am. BYO lunch. Cars will be leaving Viewbank and Watsonia at 9.45 am.

November 13th (Wed): Australian M.U. Conference Open Day at Pallotti College Millgrove. Starting at 10 am with morning tea. Cars will be leaving Viewbank and Watsonia at 8.15 am.

November 27th (Wed): Holy Spirit Watsonia M.U. at 10 am with M.U. Service and meeting (the last for 2013), then partying at Café Rimba at Springthorpe for lunch.

Elsie Storr

St Andrew's Mothers' Union

Monday November 11th at 10.30 am: Deanery Day at All Saints' Preston – Darebin M.U.

Monday November 18th at 12 noon: End of Year Break-up at The Sycamore Tree, Heidelberg. This is the final meeting of the year.

The first meeting of 2014 is on February 17th.

Betty Kettle, 9435 6533

Looking to the future

A common theme in Scripture is that great things come when the chance of it seems lowest. Abraham found a nation when his wife is past child-bearing and he is "as good as dead". That nation rises, but then divides and falls; the Incarnation happens only when it is utterly conquered. For there to be resurrection, there has first to be death.

Our parish is also in a weak position. Our numbers fall; our finances struggle. We may therefore have hope.

Several things are happening that are important to our future:

- The Archbishop has commissioned a wide-ranging **review** of the Parish of Banyule and our neighbouring parish of Ivanhoe (which now also includes Heidelberg West). The first meeting will take place on Tuesday 29th October.
- On Sunday 3rd November, after the service at each centre (8 am, 10 am, 5 pm) there will be a **congregational meeting** at that centre. Any news from Tuesday's meeting will be passed on, but the main focus will be discussion of what we should be doing next. Philip has particularly asked that the discussion should be open and frank. It is important that ideas and opinions are expressed so they are known.
- The **Annual General Meeting** will now be held on November 24th, *not* the 17th as previously planned, so that everything will be ready for it. This means that the normal service arrangements will swap between the 17th and 24th.
- Synod has passed a bill that will stop people staying on as **Vestry members** or churchwardens continuously for ever. There will be a lead-in period, but new Vestry members now would be a good thing. Now is your chance to nominate!

Peter McKay

What's Great about Synod?

Imagine being in St Paul's Cathedral with about 600 Christian, mostly male voices, singing "Guide Me O Thou Great Redeemer" with feeling! What an inspiring blast!

I thought this might be the highlight of the next three days so I let myself enjoy it.

Over the next three days I discovered synod representatives are overwhelmingly intelligent, articulate, funny and compassionate. When the Archbishop advised us on Thursday night, just as we started closing prayer, that 100 homes had been burnt down in NSW the silence was poignant as we felt for those folks involved and remembered the effects of Black Saturday in our diocese.

The synod sessions focused on the Parish Governance Bill 2013 and amendments. The only counted, tight vote was regarding Clause 9 (4). The draft of this clause said to be entitled to be on the parish electoral roll a person must have attended public worship at a worship centre six times in the preceding 12 months and twice in the preceding three months. There were two proposed amendments to this clause. The one which was passed states to be entitled to be on the parish electoral roll a person must have attended public worship at a worship centre 12 times in the preceding 12 months and three times in the preceding three months. This vote passed by only 30 votes, 257 to 227. An even more stringent amendment failed by just 20 votes.

Another part which was intensely debated was Schedule 1 rule 13 which relates to vestry membership. It states that a person is not eligible to be a warden or vestry member if from the last seven years they have been a warden or vestry member for six continuous years. This rule was passed and may have a big impact on Banyule and many other parishes when it comes into effect. The upper age limit on vestry membership has been dropped so you can keep on serving – no more age discrimination in theory at least!

If you want know more about Melbourne's 51st Synod please see me, Rod Harris or René as we were all there. Or check out the diocesan website www.melbourne.anglican.com.au

Laurel

Synod also passed motions calling for more compassion for asylum seekers, and for more regulation of gambling. Laurel asks us to pray for our Synod representatives, and for the causes that Synod fights for. — Ed.

Faith and Hope - Looking Forward

Hebrews 11:1-16

Sermon preached by Andrew Bowles at St Andrew's Rosanna, 4th November 2012

In a few weeks it is Advent season, the beginning of the church year, when we remember the first coming of Christ and look forward to his second coming. Before that, though, I think it would be helpful for us here to spend a few weeks preparing ourselves for Advent by reflecting on the situations and beliefs that make Advent so powerful and helpful for us.

Why is it that our society goes straight to celebrating Christmas and ignores Advent? Partly because of the commercial side and our love of festivals. But partly also because as a whole we are very rich and successful. And Advent is a season for the poor, for the weak, for people who are oppressed, who have no hope in themselves. Advent is for those people because for them hope is what they need to sustain themselves. That is why the Jewish people at the time of Jesus, poor and oppressed by the Romans, looked so fervently for the coming, the Advent, of the Messiah.

It's worth thinking what we do, particularly where we look, when we are in a dark and difficult situation. Where do we look to when we are sick or grieving? Where do we look to when members of our family or friends die? And where do we look to when it seems that our church is going to close? This is not an abstract question for this congregation, I know, it's one that is probably in many of your minds.

Well, in those situations I believe we can look in three different directions. Firstly, we can look back, and think about how good things were in the past, and regret that they have gone. How many times have we done that? 'I used to be fitter and have more energy.' 'I had more money and a nicer house back then.' I have had many people in many different churches talk to me regretfully about how they used to have a big Sunday School and lots of activities, which are now gone.

So one way to look is to look back. Another way is to look just to the present. But if the present is full of difficulty and darkness, then dwelling on it can lead to despair. So often when I've visited people in hospital this is the case. The present moment and its pain shrinks our attention and vision so that it seems as though it will never end.

So another fruitless way is to look down to where we are. But the third way is to look up and out, to look forward. Looking forward is the path to hope. The whole idea of Advent is about an eager expectation, looking out and looking forward to see God's Messiah coming towards us. In the Psalms the idea of hopeful faith is often expressed by looking up to the hills from where God's help is coming.

But hope in looking forward is not the same thing as wishful thinking. It's not the same thing as making up fantasies about how good things could be. It should be based on the promises of God, on informed faith. This is the subject of our reading from Hebrews this morning. This reading is about what it has meant for the people of God to have faith in God's promises throughout history. And the point is that for most of these people of faith it has always been a matter of a hopeless past, and bad present circumstances.

Things were pretty commonly bad for most of the people who get mentioned in the list of people of faith in Hebrews. But they still also kept a hope in the promises of God that were coming.

Abraham is a classic example. He was an old, childless man, wandering in the wilderness. Verse 12 says that he was 'as good as dead'. And yet this man was the father of faith and the ancestor of descendants 'as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore'. What made this possible for Abraham was his steadfast faith that God would work through him, and his vision of looking forward. And this is the case for all the saints, whom we honoured this week in All Saints' Day. Verse 13 says 'All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them'.

It is worth noticing that they 'greeted' the promises from afar. The thing that makes this kind of looking forward with hope more than just a wish that something good will happen in the future, is that faith actually brings the blessings of the future into the present in our experience. From verse 1, 'Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen'. Faith in God's promises can also transform the present, lifting despair and darkness in the present situation. And also it cuts off regret from the past, because we are not looking to the past for hope but to the promises of God in the future.

What does this have for us, then? Advent is a reminder for us that we need a clarity of vision about what faith in God's promises means. It doesn't mean that the good times of the past will come back. It doesn't mean that the present will become better. But it does mean that we are able to take hold of the coming promises of God that are sure. We can look forward with hope regardless of where we are now. As we go on in the next few weeks we'll think about the specific content of those promises and what it was that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the others were looking forward to. But for now let's just remember where it is that our hope comes from, and in what direction we should be looking.

Andrew Bowles

Vestry Notes

Meeting of Tuesday 17th September at 7.30 pm

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Gloucester Drive update: There is to be a working bee on Saturday – there is still much work to be done.

CORRESPONDENCE

A letter received re no services at Watsonia for a number of consecutive weeks. We can't afford a locum but Philip and Vestry are happy that a Morning or Evening Prayer be conducted by a parishioner.

REPORTS

Philip: Much discussion followed regarding the future direction of the parish, the possible outcomes of the Diocesan Review and alternative ways to approach the congregational meetings. We should be looking at how we can grow outreach.

René: This covered August as René has been on leave. Louisa is to attend the GAFCON conference in Nairobi for 2 weeks.

FINANCE (Geoff Murphy)

- Vestry recorded a unanimous note of commendation for the treasurer who has caught up on the finances following the theft of his computer.
- Mission giving for December will be for the Council Camp for underprivileged children.
- Due to the difficulty of having the audited accounts return by 17th November, it was agreed to move the date of the AGM to **24th November**.

- The treasurer's report was accepted and accounts to the value of \$101,521.60 as presented for the months July to September approved for payment.
- A proposed balanced budget is possible provided we economise on utilities. We have LED lights in the church and the installation of smart meters means there should be no 'estimated' bills.

WARDENS' REPORTS

Heidelberg

The "mysterious" pegs along the fence adjoining 1A Burgundy St. are markers for the sewer line.

Wider Parish

Transporting the Watsonia mower to Heidelberg is too hard. We will now claim for a new mower and whipper-snipper from insurance.

OTHER BUSINESS

- **Banyule Festival** – No enthusiasm was shown regarding involvement in this event.
- **Congregational Meetings** – 3rd November.
- **AGM** Sunday 24th November.
- **Nomination forms** for VESTRY, WARDENS, SYNOD REPS available Sunday 27th October; completed forms to be returned by Sunday 17th November.
- **Annual Reports:** Handwritten copies to office by Sunday 10th November; electronic copies to R.Bellair@rosebell.com by Thursday 14th November.

Rosemary Bellair

NB. IF YOU FEEL YOU WOULD LIKE CLARIFICATION ON ANY OF THE ABOVE POINTS, VESTRY MEMBERS AND WARDENS ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO HELP.

Anglican Men's Society

Well, here we are again, sharing our Anglican men's meeting at St Andrew's Church. As I was travelling along, I was wondering what our speaker Mark Cox looks like. He had been to Malawi in Africa, working as a youth representative for World Vision, two years in all.

I recall I met Mark many years ago when he was a teenager, so I was surprised on entering the church: Mark, a fully grown man, greeted me with a cheerful smile, a true Australian through and through, setting up his equipment.

First of all Geoff Murphy welcomed us all. With ladies present it was a great night, with 22 in attendance. Geoff opened and led the meeting throughout magnificently. He was followed by John Adams reading the First Epistle to Timothy 1—a letter from Paul, warning of false teachings. To be alert as Christians we should be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience and sincere faith, not by arguing and talking foolishness, but seeking to do God's will. Then prayer led by Albert Harvey for all who are in sickness.

It was time to call upon Mr Mark Cox. What an incredible speaker: to have achieved so much, in two years, for the people in Africa. He illustrated with film beautiful surroundings: landscapes, waterways, and how the people lived. Although they were poor, they were happy, working on government funding, helping with disabled children. The health system needed to be uplifted: doctors were in short supply. Those who were unable to have a doctor turned to the old custom of witch doctors.

The population was around 16 million people. 32% of young people attend school and 10% of children die before the age of five years. There are four main tribes and two languages.

May it be said of Mark, as Gabriel said to Daniel [Dan 9:22], I have come here to give you insight and understanding, of the people of Africa. May God bless you in your devotion to his service. Many thanks to Sir Edward and Lady Ireland.

After grace was said, we all had supper, provided by our guests and members.

God Bless—Lay Chairman Albert Harvey

The More You Give

*The more you give, the more you get.
The more you laugh, the less you fret.
The more you do unselfishly
The more you live abundantly.
The more of everything you share,
The more you'll always have to spare.
The more you love, the more you'll find
That life is good and friends are kind.
For only what we give away
Enriches us from day to day.*

Teresa 'WolfPoet' Piercey-Gate, 2000

Submitted by Rosemary Bellair

When Noah first built the Ark, so it is said, it sprung a leak and emergency repairs had to be carried out.

First of all, the dog was sent for to plug the hole with his nose, but the water still came through. Next, Noah's wife was asked to put her hand there, but it still wasn't sufficient to stop the flow. Finally, Noah came and sat in the hole.

That is why, they say, a dog still has a cold nose, a lady has cold hands, and a gentleman likes to stand with his back to the fire!

Submitted by Rosemary Bellair

It was an important day for the little church—the first time in many years that it had been graced by the presence of the bishop. The floral decorations were a picture. The silver candlesticks gleamed on the altar. Villagers poured in to listen respectfully to the great man, rumoured as a possible successor to Canterbury. Only one thing went wrong. A man in the front pew fell asleep during the bishop's sermon. A sidesman, who was sitting behind him and was appalled by this behaviour, hit him on the head with a hymn book.

"Hit me again", called out the man. "I can still hear him."